



## Grandmothers Advocacy Network (GRAN) had Successful 2016 “Orange the World” Campaign in Canada

Once again in 2016, GRANS across Canada joined the United Nations UNiTE to End Violence against Women “Orange the World” campaign. GRAN groups from coast to coast held awareness events, large and small. We engaged governments on every level and we invited other Canadian civil society organizations, community groups and individuals to join us in speaking out for gender equality and an end to violence against women, domestically and internationally. Our message emphasized the need for adequate financing to reach the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals to promote gender equality and end violence against women and girls.

Thanks to GRANS all across the country, we engaged 18 cities and communities to Orange Canada during the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. Beginning in the West, the British Columbia Legislature building in Victoria was lit up. And, in Vancouver, City Hall, BC Place, Science World, and Canada Place all glowed orange. Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam, Calgary Tower, and Saskatoon’s Prairies Wind Structure lit up in orange. In Ontario, Hamilton, Burlington, Oakville, Mississauga, Toronto City Hall and the TORONTO sign, Peterborough City Hall, Brighton, and Cobourg lit up too. Further east, Montreal, Halifax, and Fredericton all lit up orange for November 25 and beyond. In fact, Cobourg Community Centre, a very busy centre for hockey, skating, and more was “oranged up” for the entire 16 Days.



The Mayors of Victoria, Vancouver, Coquitlam, Calgary, Saskatoon, Toronto, Ottawa, Peterborough, Oakville and Fredericton made official proclamations or statements of support by video or in person. Some mayors and councils invited GRAN for official presentations and ceremonies. Council members in many municipalities wore orange for the occasion and during the 16 days.



Video clip from Mayor of Vancouver, Gregor Robertson.  
<https://www.facebook.com/GrandmothersAdvocacy/videos/1285260831544286/>

We sent letters to provincial premiers, MLAs and MPPs asking them to support the UNiTE Orange the World campaign. In Victoria, BC, the fountain in front of the legislature building and the ceremonial door glowed orange while GRAN with other community groups held a candlelight vigil. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba MLS's wore orange ribbons and statements were read in the legislature.



Candlelight Vigil at BC Legislature Building  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2P1juOQ5A0&feature=em-share\\_video\\_user](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L2P1juOQ5A0&feature=em-share_video_user)

GRAN wrote to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau with cc: to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, International Development and Status of Women early in the year to ask the Canadian Government to draw attention to the issue of violence against women by lighting up our Parliament buildings and other federal buildings across the country in Orange during the 16 days. We asked for a reaffirming statement of the Government of Canada's commitment and efforts to work together to put an end to violence against women and girls. We also wrote to Sophie Grégoire Trudeau and Governor General David Johnston asking them to support the campaign. We received an encouraging response from the Prime Minister's Office, the cabinet ministers, Mrs. Trudeau and the Governor General. We received support from many Members of Parliament across the country. The Honorable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Status of Women was the keynote speaker at a GRAN forum "Older Women Count!" in Ottawa. Some MPs wore orange in parliament on November 25, others attended some of our events during the 16 days.

MP Joyce Murray published an article on her website supporting GRAN's work to grow awareness of the UNiTE Orange the World campaign. MP Pamela Goldsmith-Jones gave a short statement on the Orange Campaign and the government's support for it in parliament on November 25. MP Anita Vandenberg applauded GRAN and many other organizations for their work in ending gender-based violence in her statement in the House of Commons on December 6, Canada's National Day of Action and Remembrance on Violence Against Women.

At least 6 GRAN articles and opinions were published by various newspapers across Canada during the 16 Days, and GRANs were interviewed on radio programs. Here is an example from the Vancouver Sun November 29, 2016  
<http://vancouversun.com/opinion/opinion-ending-violence-against-woman-and-girls>

GRAN was active on social media too. We tweeted and posted daily about Orange lighting in Canada and GRAN activities leading up to and during the 16 Days.  
<https://twitter.com/GRANadvocates> <https://www.facebook.com/GrandmothersAdvocacy/>  
We shared [@SayNO\\_UNiTE](#) tweets and Facebook posts, and GRAN group Orange campaign activities were submitted to <https://www.facebook.com/SayNO.UNiTE>

On our GRAN Website, the many Orange photos tell the story of our very successful Orange campaign in Canada. <http://grandmothersadvocacy.org/photo-gallery> .

While the Orange Campaign can be a call to raise awareness in Canada, we also see it as an opportunity to raise awareness of violence against women in sub-Saharan Africa. Violence there takes many forms, including the deprivation and neglect of grandmothers and women of all ages; child, early and forced marriage; violence in schools; and sexual violence against women and girls in conflict zones.

We wanted to let you know how GRAN participants across Canada used our grassroots network to build a greater Canadian involvement in the international UNiTE Orange campaign to keep the elimination of violence against women at the top of our domestic and international agendas.

Sincerely,

Colleen Stefanich and Janet Siddall  
Co-Chairs of GRAN End Violence Against Women Working Group

Heather Fraser and Hilary Elliot  
Co-Chairs, GRAN Leadership Team

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<http://grandmothersadvocacy.org/>